



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 49 • December 19, 2008



Canadian National Voice Interoperability Workshop

By Chris Christensen cchristensen@mt.gov

Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) staffers Chris Christensen and Scott Bradford recently attended the 2nd Canadian National Voice Interoperability Workshop in Toronto. The workshop addressed national, provincial, regional and local interoperability planning, and governance issues in Canada. It also covered trends in technology, spectrum issues and cross-border interoperability planning.

This conference presented another opportunity to reach out to our neighbors to the north and establish contact and reach consensus about working together. Valuable contacts were made with key officials from Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Considerable interest was shown in the upcoming Western Border Interoperability Working Group (WBIWG) meeting scheduled for Whitefish, MT next April 20.

Michael Hallows, Detective Chief Superintendent National Policing Improvement Agency of the UK, gave an excellent presentation on what the UK is doing. Both Scott and Chris feel there is a great desire by our Canadian neighbors to work across the border on public safety communications.

Eastern Tier Consortium Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Eastern Tier Interoperability Consortium met in Glendive on Wed., Dec. 17. Glendive Police Chief Alan Michaels gave an update on the most recent IM Finance and Governance Committee meetings, and indicated that financial reports are available on a consortium-by-consortium basis. He also updated participants on the latest IM Project Directors (IMPD) meeting and clarified that the IMPD will be meeting the second week of the month rather than the first.

Members discussed options at a Glendive Junction location, and Dennis Palmer provided an update on the status of locating the Second Master Controller. Dennis also reviewed some highlights from the Nov. fleet mapping work session and the last IM Technical Committee meeting. Site use agreements also were discussed. A meeting is being set up with at Ellsworth Air Force Base for next year to discuss partnership opportunities. Mid-Rivers Communications is another partner with the Eastern Tier.

The ETIC has decided to schedule its meetings the fourth Wednesday of the month, so the next meeting will be on Jan. 28, 2009 at the Dawson

County Courthouse Community Room, 107 West Bell in Glendive.

Mobile Data Terminal Working Group

By Scott Bradford sbradford@mt.gov

Members of the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) working group gathered in Great Falls on Wed., Dec. 17, where planning continues to be a priority for the Consortium. The meeting's primary focus was discussion of the upcoming needs assessment and elements that will provide the information to move forward on a pilot project. Original plans for a 700 MHz based system are on hold due to a lack of viable options received during the recent request for proposal, and delays with FCC decisions on the broadband initiative.

Project Manager Mark Adams with Northrop Grumman will be coordinating the assessment with assistance from members of the Mobile Data Consortium, PSSB and committee members. The goal is to have the needs assessment completed in March.

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The I-15/90 Corridor Interoperability Consortium met Thurs., Dec. 18, at the Butte Chamber of Commerce. Project Director Dave McPherson reported that the FEMA Assistance to Fire Fighters grant has been closed out and final payments made. Bob McWilliams, Beaverhead County and IMTC Chair, reported on the microwave system along the Northern Tier. Motorola is in the process of conducting coverage tests along the eastern section. Some microwave issues are begin addressed along the eastern side, but microwave on the western side is working well.

Bob also informed the group about generator maintenance issues, site development work, PSIC grant requirements, and the NEPA process on Southwest Loop sites. Newspaper advertisements have been placed locally asking for comments on various communications sites as part of the NEPA process. Tom Smith, Northrop Grumman, said that he is waiting on NEPA reports for sites in the Southwest Loop. The Forest Service is sending a CER record to indicate a "no impact" finding on the Sawtell site. Bob outlined expectations for trunking and infrastructure for the consortium that should be accomplished by the end of next summer.

Bob also reported that the IMTC has been working on the 5-year plan, and the Anaconda and Butler sites



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are on the list. Communications sites need to be included as an acceptable project in any Economic Stimulus package approved by Congress.

Members discussed the Red Mountain frequencies. Jerry Dupler, Dupler Communications, reported that the FCC has conducted the final waiver reviews, and the applications have not been dismissed. However, no action has been posted. Frequencies for the Sawtell site have been approved. Dave McPherson then reported on the last IM Project Director's meeting.

The next consortium meeting will begin at 10:00 am at the Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George St., on Thurs., Jan 15.

Upcoming Meetings

Dec. 22

IM Technical Committee Meeting
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Bldg. # 1, 2717 Skyway Drive • Lrg. Conference Rm.

Dec. 23

IM Finance Committee Work Session
Helena • 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Anderson & ZurMuehlen • 828 Great Northern Blvd.

Dec. 29

Sustainability Plan Work Session
Helena • 11:00 am to 5:00 pm
Dept. of Corrections Annex Conf. Rm.
Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

Dec. 31

Tri-County Consortium
Helena • 10:00 - 12:00 pm
Dept. of Corrections Annex Conf. Rm.
Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

Jan. 7

Central Montana Consortium (CMICC)
Great Falls • 10:00 am
Wheat Building, 750 6th Street SW

Jan. 8

Northern Tier (NTIC)
Havre • 9:00 am – noon
Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st St.

Jan. 12

IM Finance Committee
Helena • 9:00 am - Noon
Anderson & ZurMuehlen • 828 Great Northern Blvd.

Jan. 12

IM Governance Committee
Helena • Noon - 5:00 pm
Dept. of Corrections Annex Conf. Rm.
Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

Jan. 13

IM Project Directors (IMPD) Meeting
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Building # 1, 2717 Skyway Drive
Large Conference Room

Jan. 15

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am
Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce
1000 George St.

Jan. 21

South Central Montana Consortium (SCMIC)
Big Timber • 10:00
Carnegie Library, 314 McLeod St.

Jan 26

IM Technical Committee Meeting
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Bldg. # 1, 2717 Skyway Drive • Lrg. Conference Rm.

Jan. 27

Western Consortium (WICC)
10:00 am
Location to be announced

Jan. 28

Eastern Tier (ETIC) Consortium
Glendive • 10:00 am
Dawson County Courthouse Community Room
207 West Bell

Jan. 28

Tri-County Consortium
Helena • 10:00 am
Dept. of Corrections Annex Conf. Rm.
Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

Please Note: HAM will not be published the next two weeks because of Christmas and New Year's holidays. Please expect your next issue on Friday, Jan. 9, 2009.

We wish you all a safe and joyous holiday season.



Eastern Tier Consortium & IM Technical Committee Member Butch Renders is an East Coast shopping mall Santa Claus every year. The editor appreciates being able to feature a photo of Butch in his "other career."